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## The PRESIDENT'S PEN

by Howard Gould, W4NVF

Happy New Year to all GARS members. I hope this newsletter finds each and every one of you including your family members in the best of health and ready for the next year ahead.

A historical year for GARS, 1994 recorded more new members than any previous year. We accomplished many good deeds as a club together with all our radio demonstrations. We also helped many a member with their knowledge of radio operating skills, antenna building, packet, DF, and CW.

Many members are offering to help in any way they can, and this says the message is getting out that we have something to offer and we care.

Don't be afraid to mention something you think has some value to it as it may very well be the thing that makes the whole thing come together and click.

It is nice to see a large amount of families coming together here at GARS. Seeing husbands and wives enjoying themselves in a common hobby is as gratifying as seeing them at the meetings. We even have large families with youngsters who are hams also. We look for more family members in the future to boost not only our membership numbers, but the image we promote to the community at large that we are a respected hobby that anyone can enjoy with a little hard work in getting a license.

The regular meeting and fellowship dinner before the meeting is a total success from the signs on the faces of all at the last meeting. Everyone enjoyed themselves and were chatting away with their neighbor.

Williams Seafood likes us and are striving to make us welcome there. This is a good place to conduct our meetings as well as an excellent place to eat. How long we continue to meet here depends

on our ability to find a permanent home. The committee I formed to find a place expired at the end of '94. If someone wants to help, call me or bring it to my attention at the next meeting.

The 440 repeater is doing well on 444.525+ and the tone access is 156.7.

Good things are in store for us at the Snellville site as we go into the new year. Edwin, KC4VLJ will put up a high gain antenna increasing the ears on this machine, and when we go to the new tower things will really pop.

You need to try it out especially if

(Prez, Continued on p. 9)

## JOE BIDDLE, AD4PZ GARS

### HAM OF THE MONTH

by Pickett Cummins, AD4S

Interestingly enough, Joe was born in Marietta... but left there when he was one year old. He grew up in Antwerp, Ohio. This is a small town of 2,000. Joe went all the way through high school in Antwerp. He was interested in all sports activities but enjoyed his science courses.

When he was in the fourth grade, he built his first electronics (electrical) project... a home brew hot dog cooker. It was made out of a wooden frame with

(Ham, Continued on p. 2)

## The Vester Slow-Scan Amateur TV System

by Vince Hrabosky KE4DYD

After a friend and fellow ham introduced me to an inexpensive slow scan TV (SSTV) system I decided to see if I could build one myself for an unbelievable \$10. This describes my beginning experience and observations with what is known as the Vester SSTV system.

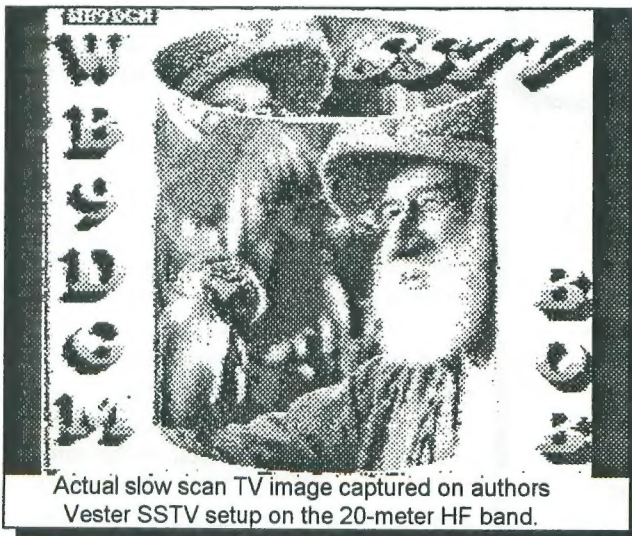
According to the ARRL manuals, SSTV is a form of television, but with a

slow scan rate. My experience is that SSTV, as it is being used on the 20 meter band, is more like the transmission of still color images (a color FAX). Each image, depending on the mode being used, can take 1 or more minutes to send and is a full color picture. The transmitted image is made up of audio tones that are decoded into individual pixels by the

receiving station.

If you've ever tuned to 14.230 MHz or 14.233 MHz on a Saturday morning or afternoon, the chirps and warbles you hear are other Hams exchanging their artwork, captured images of themselves, shacks, beloved animals, and cartoons. Birds, cats and dogs and the Hams themselves appear to be among the

(Vester, Cont'd on p.6)



Actual slow scan TV image captured on authors Vester SSTV setup on the 20-meter HF band.



## GARS News

*GARS News* is the official monthly organ of the Gwinnett Amateur Radio Society serving its members and other persons interested in the advancement of the amateur radio art.

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If possible, submit *News* items in ASCII format by posting a private message to Dean Matthews on the *GARS* conference of the Scientific Atlanta BBS (903-5487), then use the Save Attached save command, which will prompt you to upload your ASCII file. Art can be accepted in TIFF or PCX format on IBM compatible disk.

Contact the Editor for odd format compatibility, or other means of transfer. Deadline for article submissions is the first Thursday of each month.

### GARS News EDITOR

Dean Matthews, AD4OD

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## JOIN GARS

Membership dues for the 1994-1995 are:

\$25.00 for Individual Memberships  
\$35.00 for Family Memberships

Dues reduced for mid-year additions, see membership application for details, or...

Call Jack Herndon, KE4EMA at 995-0438 for more information about joining *GARS*.

(Ham, Continued from p. 1)

bottle caps for feet and two large nails.

Each conductor of an AC cord was attached to each of the nails. Hot dogs were used to complete the circuit and thus became warm (if not hot). Joe said that his family used his cooker until they got their first micro wave oven. When Joe finished high school, he obtained a degree in electronics engineering from ITT Technical Institute and set out to seek his fortune. Delta Air Lines flew Joe to Atlanta to interview for a job but didn't hire him. Joe decided that the grass was greener in Atlanta than in Antwerp so he stayed. He signed on with ADCOR, a manufacturer of security alarms, as an electronics technician. He subsequently worked for a number of military industrial firms in robotics, and quality control. As Joe put it, he went through a series military industrial layoffs. Joe finally came to his present situation with Lanier Products as a product analyst. He is involved in both software and hardware analysis and testing. Along the way, Joe picked up some substantial PC skills which have been a real benefit to *GARS*. Joe had an early interest in radio when he became interested in the Citizen's Band service. At one time he was involved in REACT and had a 102 inch stainless steel whip on his Yamaha RD350 motorcycle. (don't you know that looked really good..?) Joe and his dad both became interested in Amateur Radio about the same time and got their licenses at the same time. Joe got his novice license in 1978 while still in Antwerp, Ohio and was licensed as KA8LFL. His dad helped get some equipment on the air and put up a quad. Unfortunately the equipment was lost in a house fire.

Like many before him, Joe let license expire.... One of the people that Joe worked with at Lanier was a fellow named Jack Herndon (presently *GARS* membership chairperson and KE4EMA/AA).

Both Jack and Joe became interested in Ham Radio from news article. (Joe didn't mention how they got Steve, KS4EV) interested but the writer knows that they were all involved at the same time). Joe took his Tech Plus test in July, 1993 and in September received

the call sign, KE4FNI. At that time his equipment consisted of a 2 meter HT. Joe learned of *GARS*. By monitoring on 2 meters repeaters, and became a member in October of 1993. Shortly after this, Joe bought Bill Tacket's (King Noodle Four Noodle) Drake TR-7 so he could get on the HF bands. Joe also upgraded to Advanced in October of 1993. He took the General written, the 13 wpm code and the Advanced written, all at the same time. In November, 1993, Joe became KR4IK. Joe learned the code by monitoring on the air, *GARS* repeater practice and using Morse Academy on his computer.

In December, 1993, Joe passed all of the requirements for his Extra class license. While waiting for his new call sign, Joe worked WAS on the Geritol Net on 80 meters as "/AE". Joe finally received his new call sign on February 15, 1994, and became known as "the Pink Zipper", AD4PZ. Now it was time to make a CW contact on the air. (Think about that.... Joe had his Extra Class license and had never made a CW contact on the air). Joe has an 80 meter

(Ham, Continued on p. 11)

## GARS GROWS GREATLY BY GOLLY!

Ten new members were voted in at the December meeting!

### Welcome these Hams to *GARS*:

Joe Barnes (T) KE4SWE  
Frank M. Davis, Jr. (T) KE4SWD  
Michael Gioka (G) WB2SQS  
Carmine Guerrazzi (A) K1CFW  
Michael Trybula (T+) KA4RKG  
Clarence D. Uptegrove (E) K4QBV  
Michael Warner (A) KE4MF  
Donald (Don) Willey (T+) KC4SMG  
Frances (Helen) Willey (T) KC4ZEM

### Awaiting Calls or Studying:

Thomas J. Hilborn, {associate}

Welcome these new members at the next club meeting or on the air! -ED ♦



## Straight Key Night. Another Lollapalooza

by Pickett Cummings, AD4S

New Years eve brought us another great amateur radio event; Straight Key Night. This years was at least as much fun as 1993 if not more so. Not only did we have more **GARS** members participating in the roundtable, we encouraged the use of home-brew straight keys.

A number of the **GARS** CW regulars (or is it irregulars) who laughingly call ourselves the CWUG (CW User Group) encouraged all of the **GARS** members to build and straight key and join in the round table.

We are sure that many of you probably copied the roundtable even though you may not have joined in. We are already talking about what we can do next year to make this fun night more accessible by even more **GARS** members..... maybe two round tables; a very slow one and a 10-13 wpm one. Everyone should give us some input on how we can make this even better.

Based on my notes, nine **GARS** members participated in the roundtable using home-brew straight keys. Howie, W4NVF, checked in using an old Potter Brumfield relay with a spare pare of contacts. Dean, AD4OD, checked in with his "Erector Set" key. Dean's son, Matt, got an Erector Set for Christmas, but is having to wait for the next **GARS** meeting before he can use all the parts.

On the other hand, Joe, AD4PZ, checked in with three different home-brew keys. The first time he checked in he was using his hacksaw blade special. The next time he checked in with his Match Box Car key. This was fairly unique since the toy car had rear suspension and that was what Joe was pressing in order to key his rig. Finally, Joe checked in with his "Curtis" key. This was a brass house key with the name "Curtis" on it.

Another interesting home-brew keying mechanism was used by Bob, WB4RPM. We will be calling Bob "Copper Fingers" in the future. Bob cut two pieces of copper water pipe, attached a wire to each piece and put one on his thumb and one on his index

finger. He keyed his rig by touching the two pieces of copper pipe together. Howie praised Bob on his dedication his putting his water system out of commission in order to join the round table.

Duane, KD4KCR, checked in for one go around with his usual "golden fist" but my notes don't show if he was using a home-brew key. Ron, N4SBI checked in using an "antique" J38 key. Ron said that he had to do so much work on the J38 to get it usable, he figured it now qualified as home-brew. Bring it to the meeting Ron and let the members decide.

Vince, KE4DYY, checked in with a real home-brew winner.... made from a skeleton key. Why didn't I think of that. We also heard from Randy, AC4PD. Randy was also using a J38. Yours truly, AD4S checked in with a "Rule the Bands" key made from a steel computer forms ruler mounted on a custom made wooden base. The contacts were made out of brass machine screws so that I could tell everyone that I was "pounding brass".

We will be judging the home-brew straight keys at the next regular **GARS** meeting. A certificate will be awarded to the "favorite". Everyone attending will be able to cast a vote.

Also heard and worked on the frequency just before the round table began was Johnny, W4WKP. Johnny was keying his rig with the mike button and had a surprisingly good fist considering the keying method.

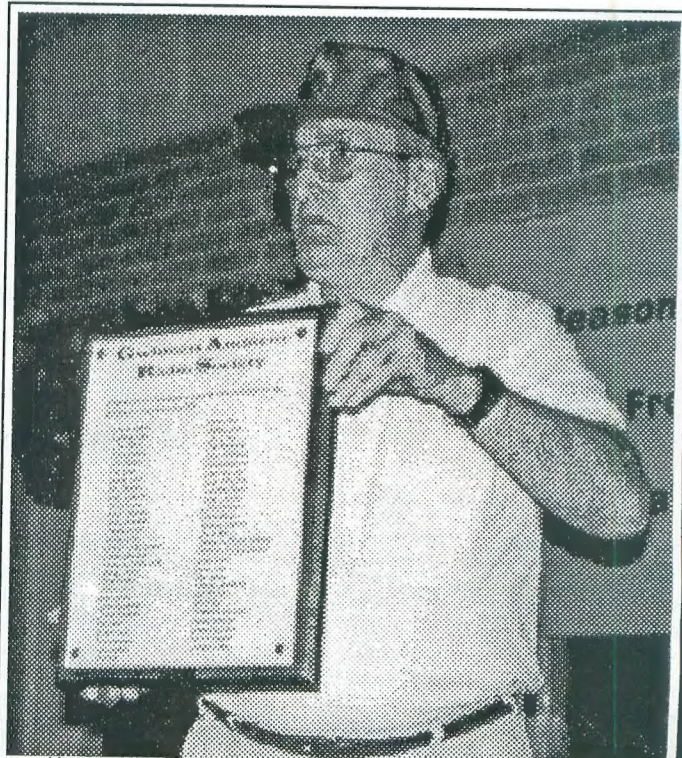
We know of several members

who had built keys for the event and for one reason or another were unable to make it to the round table. Three that we know of were Cheryl, KE4JKM, Steve, AD4LY and Steve, KS4EV. We would love for you to bring your keys and include them in the judging.

I spent most of the night working 40 meters. Two of the contacts were fairly interesting. The first contact was with Karen, N4YGP, who was operating from a 28 foot catamaran down at Key West. The other interesting contact was with KB3BCE in Dillsburg, PA who was operating with a homebrew infrared key that he built from a QST article.

We are looking for other interesting stories from SKN and if we get enough will publish a follow up article.

Well, that is about all for another fantastic SKN with **GARS**. We will be thinking about how to spice up next New Years Eve. Maybe it will be old equipment this time... who knows..? ♦



Howie, W4NVF shows off the new plaque created by Joe, AD4PZ to thank the repeater fund donors. Anyone who donated toward the purchase of the new repeater has their name listed, and the plaque will be on permanent display in the main repeater shack.



# SCANNING HOTLANTA

BY BOB LANGLEY, KD4SHD

Most of you may not know me since I just recently joined the Gwinnett Amateur Radio Society, but I have been interested in scanners for most of my life.

There seems to be some others in the club that are also interested in scanning, so I thought someone should start a column in the newsletter. So, here we are. I have two goals for the column:

1) for those already interested in scanning, I want the column to be a source of information, and a way to help each other out with those elusive frequencies

2) for those not into scanning, to show that there are more things to listen to on the airwaves than the local repeater, and hopefully introduce them to a fun and growing hobby.

As you will conclude when you finish this article, it is about nothing in particular, and a lot in general. This is going to be a "Pot Luck" article, with bits and pieces of information and frequencies.

One suggestion that I have, and one that I plan on accomplishing, is to come up with a list of frequencies for various emergencies. These could include a hazardous material spill, airplane crash, hostage situation, snow storm, tornado, etc. Even if you just make a list of local police, fire, and civil defense and emergency management frequencies, it would be a good start.

Did you know that some 2 meter radios will receive frequencies in the business and police bands? My ICOM IC-2SRA will receive from 136 to 174 MHz. This means that a lot of you can listen to business and public safety frequencies on your ham radio, without even buying a scanner. Here are some specific VHF frequencies for those of you with radios capable of this band.

## FIRE:

154.190 Atlanta FD - dispatch  
154.445 Atlanta FD - Tac 2  
153.830 Atlanta FD - fireground  
154.265 College Park FD  
154.250 Decatur FD  
154.160 Smyrna FD  
155.160 GA Baptist Lifeline Helicopter

## POLICE:

155.955 Decatur PD  
155.670 Forest Park PD  
154.680 GA State Patrol Base-to-car  
154.800 GA State Patrol Car-to-base  
155.910 GA State Patrol - Metro Atlanta dispatch  
154.905 State Intersystem (Interesting chit-chat here)  
154.935 State Intersystem  
159.090 Marietta PD  
155.685 Marietta PD  
155.700 Atlanta PD - detectives (simulcast on 460.425)

For those of you with scanners, here are some UHF frequencies for the Atlanta area:

453.400 Clayton Co FD - dispatch  
453.300 Clayton Co EMS - to - hospital  
446.260 Cobb Co FD - dispatch  
460.600 Roswell FD  
462.950 EMS Metro Ambulance Service  
460.150 Atlanta PD - Downtown  
460.300 Atlanta PD - NW  
460.350 Atlanta PD - SW  
460.025 Atlanta PD - NE  
460.075 Atlanta PD - SE  
460.425 Atlanta PD - detectives  
460.200 Atlanta PD - license checks  
460.525 Atlanta PD - TAC 2 (SWAT, Red Dogs)  
460.250 College Park PD  
45.560 GA State Civil Defense  
453.825 Roswell PD

Cobb, Gwinnett, and Dekalb counties have installed trunked radio systems, which I will look at in another article.

Well, these are some of my favorite frequencies. If you have a list of your top 20 favorite frequencies, send them in and share them with others that enjoy this exciting hobby. I will print them in future articles. Please note on the list if you wish to remain anonymous.

I would appreciate any and all input and suggestions. If there are enough of you, maybe we can get our own net time on the repeater!

## Contact GARS

### OFFICERS 1994-1995

**President:** W4NVF Howard Gould 921-8362  
**Vice Pres:** KD4QFD Larry Osborne 972-1185  
**Secretary:** KE4GYM Ike Chapman 339-8123  
**Treasurer:** WA4QYY Charles Evans 448-0930  
**Activities:** KA4KKF David Adcock 963-5767  
**Editor:** AD4OD Dean Matthews 962-8941  
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KD4EHG Buddy Dowdell 476-1616  
KD4HMC Sam Roundtree 921-7423  
W4NZJ Jud Whatley 972-1940

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KE4EMA Jack Herndon 995-0438  
AD4PZ Joe Biddle 963-4316  
KE4GYM Ike Chapman 339-9231  
KD4KCR Duane Hansen 962-6086  
W4NVF Howie Gould 921-8362  
KA4EMV Bob DeVeau 923-3963  
K4HRB Ron Davidson 466-4932  
**Membership:** KE4EMA Jack Herndon 995-0438

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W4WKP Johnny Fearon 466-4038  
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**Field Day:** KE4DYY Vincent Hrabosky 246-9630  
**Ham Classes:** KA9UIE Steve Idler 513-0428  
**HF/VHF/UHF Awards Manager:** KE4GGP Don Ennest 923-4851  
**DXCC Awards Checker:** AF4Y Frank Deak 978-6546



# GARS News Contributors for 1994, Thank you ALL!!!

An editors dream - members who write articles! When I started to compile this list I could not believe my eyes. What a great group of hams! What a variety of topics! What a collective wealth of knowledge! Thank you, thank you, thank you all..... Odie (aka -ED)

## Johnny Fearon, W4WKP

Presidents Pen, 1/94  
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## Howard Gould, W4NVF

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## David Adcock, KA4KKF

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## Pete Shaw, K4LDR

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## Jack Herndon, KE4EMA

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## Ron Davidson, K4HRB

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## Duane Hansen, KD4KCR

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## Cheryl McClure, KE4JKM

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## Larry Osborne, KD4QFD

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## Tammi Ford, KE4IKK

Lets All Go to Ft. Yargo, 7/94

## Steve Burel, AD4LY

"Cooking" on CW, 7/94  
Sweet Potato Delight, 11/94  
Twilight Zone Skip, 11/94

## John Sokol, KE4KPV

Working Sci-Trek, 8/94

## Vince Hrabosky, KE4DYY

Field Day '95', 9/94

## Vince Hrabosky, KE4DYY

CQ Special Event Day!, 9/94

## Joe Biddle, AD4PZ

Upgrade Fever, 9/94  
GARS November Foxhunt, 12/94

## Rick Morris, KD4VOJ

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## Pat Runkle, KC4DOO

ARES News, 10/94-11/94

## Ted Carlough, KE4PXX

The Test, 10/94

## Randy Drescher, AC4PD

GARS Goes to Arcado Elementary, 11/94

-oooooh I hope I didn't miss anybody in this. If I did I owe you a steak dinner. (I'd rather owe it to you than beat you out of it.) -ED

## Gwinnett Amateur Radio Society

### Monthly Meeting Minutes

December 15, 1994

Officers in attendance: Howie Gould, W4NVF, President; Larry Osborne, KD4QFD, Vice President; Ike Chapman, KE4GYM, Secretary; Charles Evans, WA4QYY, Treasurer; David Adcock, KA4KKF, Activities Manager; Dean Matthews, AD4OD, Newsletter Editor.

The meeting was called to order at 19:37 local time at Williams Seafood Restaurant in Duluth by President Gould. All club members and visitors introduced themselves with a total of 58 persons signing the log.

The minutes for the November meeting were approved as published in the newsletter.

Charles, WA4QYY, gave the treasurers report which was accepted as read.

Jack, KE4EMA, presented 10 applications for membership. A motion was made and seconded to accept the applications, the motion passed without opposition. The new members of GARS are: Joe Barnes (T), KE4SWE; Frank M. Davis, Jr. (T), KE4SWD; Michael Gioka (G), WB2SQS; Carmine Guerrazzi (A) K1CFW; Thomas J. Hilborn, {associate}; Michael Trybula (T+), KA4RKG; Clarence D. Upthegrove (E), K4QBV; Michael Warner (A), KE4MF; Donald (Don) Willey (T+), KC4SMG; and Frances (Helen) Willey (T), KC4ZEM.

GARS Service Awards certificates were presented to all GARS members that participated in GARS events during 1994. These events included the radio demonstrations at Sam's Club, Tribble Mill Park, K-Mart, Arcado Elementary School, and Benefield Elementary School, the parades at Snellville and Dacula, the tower work crew, net control for the GARS Want, Swap, Sell, and Information Net and the code practice, and the security team at the ARC Hamfest.

Howie unveiled a plaque to be placed in the repeater shack containing the names of all those contributing to the repeater fund for the purchase of the new Mark 4 repeater.

Howie presented Duane, KD4KCR, with a plaque recognizing Duane as the GARS Ham of the Year for 1994.

The HRO certificate was won by Brenda, KE4RWV.

The executive committee represented by Larry, KD4QFD, made a presentation of an award to Howie and Marie Gould for hosting the monthly Howiethons.

The meeting was adjourned at 20:45 local time. ♦



# QUA

## 1st Tuesday,

**Metro Atlanta Telephone Pioneers**  
Old Hickory House on Chamblee-Dunwoody Rd. in Dunwoody. Dutch dinner is at 6:30PM, followed by meeting. TI-145.41-

## 1st Wednesday - HamWatch

Shoney's 11690 Alpharetta Hwy., Roswell (about 2 1/2 miles North of Holcomb Bridge Rd across from North Fulton Hospital) Dinner at 6:30PM. Meeting is at 7:30 PM

## 1st Thursday

**N.E. Georgia Amateur Radio Club**  
Jefferson Civic Center, off Memorial Dr. toward Winder from Jefferson. Meeting is at 6:30PM. TI-147.225+

## 1st Thursday - Atlanta Radio Club

Kitteredge Magnet School, North Druid Hills Rd. and Briarcliff. 6:00PM. Meeting is at 7:30PM TI-146.82-

## 2nd Wednesday

**North Fulton Radio League**  
Cherokee Cattle Company, 11208 Alpharetta Hwy. Dinner at 6:00PM. Meeting at 7:30PM TI-145.47-

## 2nd Thursday

**Alford Memorial Radio Club**  
Elks Lodge on Memorial Drive. Dinner at 6:00PM Meeting at 7:30PM. TI-146.76-

## 2nd Saturday

**East Atlanta LAN**  
Scott Blvd Baptist Church in Decatur. Meeting is at 10:00AM. TI-145.41-

## 3rd Thursday

**Gwinnett Amateur Radio Society**  
Williams Seafood, 3560 Buford Hwy, Just north of Pleasant Hill Rd.. Dinner begins around 6:00PM, and last through the program and meeting which follow. TI-147.075+ ♦

(Vester, continued from p. 1)

favorite items sent to other Hams. That and when the holidays arrive, greetings and best wishes in a number of forms that include composites, scanned pictures from magazines, and captured images from their favorite television programs.

The primary modes that most SSTV operators appear to use are the Scottie 1 and Scottie 2 modes. The Vester system I built also supports the Robot, WeFax, AVT, FAX480, Colorfax, and Martin modes. Though I've only heard the Scottie and Robot 72 modes on 20 meters.

SSTV also has its form of a net. The nets held are much like those *GARS* holds every Tuesday, with the exception that net control will often times retransmit the received SSTV images to those that are unable to receive the image from the original sender. The nets held during special occasions, award a certificate to best picture fitting the occasion. On Thanksgiving, one established net awarded best picture to the HAM that constructed a composite of a turkey with his head replacing the turkey's head. Surprisingly enough, a few Hams are quite artistically talented.

Ben Vester created the Vester system. If you have a copy of the January and December 1994 QST, Ben has two very good articles describing his system in these issues. For those of you that don't have the articles, the system is comprised of a simple clipper circuit and software executed by GWBASIC on an IBM compatible PC.

Vester requires a video adapter capable of supporting 256 colors and has options for a selection from a number of adapters. Also if you don't have one of the adapters supported or an SVGA card, there are a variety of VESA drivers available that the Vester software will support should you have a standard VGA as I do.

The system is 99% software and I'd like to warn all that this system is not for those that want a "plug and play" SSTV system. I consider it something for the experimenter that isn't afraid to spend some time and energy to make it work. The individual that created my interest has since purchased a Pasokon

system which I understand, greatly simplifies just about every aspect of transmitting and receiving pictures.

The Jan. QST containing the clipper circuit has an error. The circuit (p.25) should use pin 7 on the DB-9 connector and pin 4 on the DB-25 connector as the transmit pin (RTS on the RS232 pin-out). The schematic references pins 8 and 5 (CTS) and is in error.

The clipper interconnects the PC to the transceiver via the RS232 port on the PC and an audio out and Microphone in on the transceiver. I originally used my phone jack, but have since moved the input to the clipper to the phone patch output on my rig.

The audio output from the clipper is tied to my phone patch input, but if you are clever, you can probably manufacture a cable with a switch to feed the transceiver through the Mike input.

On the PC end, the clipper is powered by, feeds and is fed by the RS232 port on the PC. After that, software does the rest. After I assembled my circuit, I plugged it in, tuned to a QSO in progress and immediately received color bars (a positive indication the receive section was working).

My cost was about \$10 with all of the components needed acquired from my local Radio shack. Ben supplies the Radio Shack numbers and I no trouble finding the parts. Its likely that you may have some of the components on hand which would reduce your overall cost.

NOTE: The resistor RX\* needs to be of a value that will drive your rig at a level it can handle. I started with a 46k ohm resistor, but found that I was overdriving my rig and will use a potentiometer I have on hand and just adjust it to something suitable.

To be totally honest, the Vester system is not very user friendly. The comment was made in the December article and is an accurate statement. The software used consists of different GWBASICS routines for receive, transmit, slide show, and image conversion, plus a few shareware utilities. Configuration and adjustment is the most difficult part of getting the system to work. But once configured, the system appears to work relatively well.

(Vester, continued on p. 7)



(Vester, continued from p. 6)

Most of my time was spent configuring the line timings for each mode. These timings are manually adjusted to correct skewing of the received image. Too high of a value, the pictures slants right, too low, slants left.

I also relied on rough estimates rather than counting pixels. Ben does supply a GWBASIC program that, given a corrected line time for the Scottie 1 mode, will provide you with suggested values for the remainder of the modes. I made adjustments to these values to further correct minor slanting in some instances and a major slant problem in the ROBOT 72 mode. Fortunately Scottie 1 is one of the more popular modes and after a few days, I started receiving straight images.

As I indicated above, configuration is the time consuming part. To my surprise, a number of configuration parameters needed to be modified in each routine (i.e. receive, transmit slideshow etc.). These include COM port, Gross timer, Line Timings, plus a few more.

I would rather have liked to have seen the parameters contained in a single file that could be easily modified by a text editor, but this is not the case. My guess is that the Vester software evolved over time with Ben making separate functions operational.

At times, the received pictures are received out of sync (shifted left or right on the screen). After reception, the software allows you to shift it back into place (left or right, or up and down) then you can save it for later viewing to impress your friends, or to re-transmit it to someone else.

When saving the received image, there is an option to save it as a compressed file to save disk space. The quality of the image is subject to band fading and the number of times its been re-transmitted. Band fading coupled with a poor received signal will produce a speckled colored band across the received image. Someone tuning his rig near the SSTV used

produces a white band across the picture for the duration of the tone.

On the front page of this newsletter is a sample picture captured with my Vester system. This is a full color picture modified for size and converted to black and white for reprint in the newsletter. It looks considerably better when received and displayed on the PC.

Also, the Vester system will receive those weather FAX transmissions you often hear at 8078 mHz. One again, configuration and line timing parameters need adjustment.

Ben provides 2 additional WeFax GWBASIC routines to receive in VGA/EGA modes. The WXPIX.BAS routine will display the fax as it arrives with color replacing the gray scale image, whereas in the main receive software, RT.BAS, the fax is NOT visible, until the receive time entered expires, or when you halt the receive processes.

The images themselves are decodable even when the received signal strength is quite low. As long as the audio tones are distinguishable, a recognizable form of the picture can be

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(Vester, continued from p. 7)

decoded, but as can be expected, an S9 signal produces the clearest picture.

In the Scottie 1 and Scottie 2 modes, the Vester receive software (RT.BAS) will display the incoming image pixel by pixel. Ben chose, probably for speed reasons, to not do this for the Robot 72 images. This may be due to the probability that these are of higher resolution and are transmitted much faster than the Scottie formats.

Robot 72 and the other modes seem to be rare, so I really haven't much experience with them. When the Scottie images are received, the first few pixel lines are a gray scale, often including the call sign of the sender. This can be moved off of the screen prior to saving the picture.

One interesting aid is during reception, the software turns the PC speaker on with a constant tone and an annoying tick occurring about 2 every second. This tone helps during the initial operation checks and when your receiving a ROBOT 72 mode image because of the lack of image display, but after a while, it can get to you and I turned mine off. There is a option to disable the tone and tick completely in the RT.BAS routine.

The latest version contains routines that will convert you favorite GIF or TIFF file for transmission. Once again, Ben has these in separate routines. He suggests, and I agree, that you can minimize the anguish by creating a few DOS Batch (.bat) files to automate some of the often used command sequences.

If you do decide to try the system, the software is available on the ARRL BBS and, I've uploaded version F to the GARS Conference on the Scientific Atlanta BBS.

I also advise that before you spend the bucks to build the board, that you should acquire the software, GWBASIC, and try the slideshow out. NOTE: You will need to acquire a copy of GWBASIC as it is not included with the supplied software.

Ben has included a few pictures and if you like I can supply you with more. This will give you an immediate indication as to whether you'll have display problems or not and will show you what a received SSTV image looks like. This

will also point out that the software requires one of the assemble modules called be relocated to the C:\DOS directory. Another small matter that required resolution early on.

Just a few more hints, I would suggest that you execute everything from the DOS command line with all TSRs and whatever else you have running in the background removed. Because timing is critical with the Vester system, any TSR, WINDOWS, or other software that could change the timing in our PC could contribute to synchronization problems on either receive, transmit, or both. I've also taken Ben's suggestion to define a RAM disk for use by the software as a temporary receive space for received files and menu display.

NOTE: if your RAM disk is anything other than "D:" it will be a parameter you need to change in a few of the GWBASIC routines. As luck had it, mine is the E drive, and I had another parameter to change in several routines.

To quickly configure my PC, I've used the menu option supplied with DOS 6.2 to allow me to boot up with a number of RAM disk and memory configurations with a single key entry at boot time and my SSTV configuration being one of them. If you haven't noticed it yet, this can get just a little complicated and a little GWBASIC and PC experience does help.

I am by no means an expert with SSTV, nor will I claim that I totally understand the Vester system. The fragmentation of the software was, and still is, very frustrating. BUT, For a an hour of hardware construction and for just \$10, my son and I have a SSTV system to enjoy.

One last thing. If you haven't realized it, I had a great time getting the SSTV system up and running. I transmitted my first image a week ago to the individual that caused me to ride this roller coaster, and was totally elated when he sent it back and I received it just as it was sent. If you decide you'd like to decode those 20 meter warbles for a few dollars, and don't mind a small challenge, try the Vester system. And when you think you'd like to try transmitting, we can do it on 2 or 10 meters when your ready. ♦

## ROOKIE RADIO NOTES

by Cheryl McClure, KE4JKM

Happy New Year! Welcome to Rookie Radio 1995. This year we're looking forward to lots of fun and educational activities. We'll start the year out with a few antenna classes that we can do indoors. When the weather cooperates we will repeat our popular "come and build any antenna you want (including dipoles)" class.

If there is enough interest, we can have another packet or HF demonstration. Rookie Radio is here for you. Tell us what your interests are and we will design a program to meet that interest.

I recently found an excellent book on amateur radio in the Lawrenceville branch of the Gwinnett Library. It covers all the stuff everyone forgets to tell you when you're first starting out. It also includes a chapter explaining basic electronics that I think is much better than anything else I have read. The book is "All About Ham Radio" by Harry Helms (621.3841 Dewey Decimal No). Check it out and let me know what you think.

They also have a current copy of "The ARRL Operating Manual". This is a great resource. Can't afford to buy it at HRO (\$18)? Check it out for free!

Don't forget the 1995 Morse Code Class will be starting soon. In the meantime, practice your code with us on Tuesday and Thursday nights at 9 PM on the GARS 2 meter repeater. We send five minutes of code at 5,8,13,18 and 20 words per minute and then read back the text. It's easy to see how your code speed is progressing and if you are mixing up your "S" and "H". Even if you're not brave enough to read what you copied, please let us know that you are listening. It makes it more fun!

Stay tuned to the Tuesday night net. I will have specific dates on the upcoming antenna classes soon. If you are interested in direction finding antennas or quads, you won't want to miss out. ♦ GARS donated many of the current amateur radio books to the Gwinnett libraries a couple years ago, maybe it's time for more. -ED.



(Prez, Continued from p.1)

you are in the Atlanta area as it hears well to the southeast.

This is the month for nominations for 1995 officers. The nominating committee will give us their choices, and you, the membership, will give us your additional choices at the January meeting. Please have the permission of the person you are nominating, who must be a full member of GARS. Nominee names will then be published in the February newsletter. Further nominations from the floor will be accepted at the February election meeting. Each member will vote for one nominee for each office. The order of elections shall be. President, Vice president, Secretary, Treasurer, and Activities Manager.

It was my pleasure to present the 1994 GARS Ham Of The Year Award to Duane Hanson, KD4KCR at the December meeting, a man most deserving of this highly regarded presentation which

culminated a year of activity on his part that covered a lot of ground, and left a lot of people touched by his helping hand. I personally could not find another in the club that had done so much for the hobby, and for his fellow man.

There is a lot to be done in 1995 to keep the club moving toward the goal of seeing that the general public is aware of our communication ability, and to be prepared for any emergency.

We need to promote Amateur Radio as a hobby that any one can enjoy. There is no better way to expose our hobby to the general public than by continuing our radio demonstrations at various stores in the Gwinnett County area.

The addition of the tower-trailer being worked on by many of our club members, will give us an impressive added attraction to set up at these demonstrations.

We mustn't forget the schools and youth organizations that have hungry young minds eager to learn something about Amateur Radio.

We will be calling upon all GARS members to support the efforts to make these events take place.

Thanks to Cheryl, KE4JKM, and Steve, KS4EV the code practice sessions have continued through the holidays. More volunteers are needed to be net control for these sessions. Contact Steve, AD4LY or Johnny, W4WKP to find out how you can help. Net controls Ops are also needed on the GARS regular Tuesday net - call John, KE4KPV.

#### Williams Seafood Offers Buffet

If we can seat 50 people, Williams will give us an all-you-can-eat buffet for \$9.95, with all items from the menu. Can we seat 50 for a buffet? I am open

to comments on this and would like for someone to handle the details.

#### Snellville Site Examined

On December 28th, Jim Thomas, WB4HCV and myself met at the Snellville site and discussed what we would do if the County let GARS maintain the 150 foot tower and building.

GARS will be responsible for keeping the tower in good condition as well as the building. Any improvements made will be at GARS expense and will remain with the County in case of termination of agreement, which is unlikely.

GARS will draw up an agreement with the County which will be submitted to Jim Thomas who will have his legal Department look over. If all is in order, he will then take it to the County Commission for signing. We will have to remove our existing tower which has been slowly rusting away and has bad legs. Our existing repeater house will remain as a utility storage and secondary radio operations. We will also be responsible for keeping the site clean and that means mowing tall grass during the warm weather.

It is a good thing for GARS. We will begin tests for the 2 meter main repeater as soon as we get word that we can go up the tower. If it does not work out, we will put the 440 up the top and digipeater below. The site should have excellent coverage to the southeast.

Also that day, we had to install a new style of high security gate lock, since vandals had damaged the old one.

#### New Repeater Gets Sick Again

On December 30th the repeater had to be taken off line for repairs after a week of intermittent patch problems.

I located a blown chip in the processor.  
(Prez, Continued on p.10)

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(Prez, Continued from p.1)

essor board which is the decode chip for the DTMF which makes it brain dead for receiving commands. The boards were sent back for repair or replacement under warranty. The old back up machine went back on line and later developed a problem in its controller, which must also be repaired. In the meanwhile, the patch is down.

I have had a few good men come forward at the last meeting to offer help in laying down phases of putting our communications system together. I am pleased to say that we will have a team of very qualified existing repeater owners and technicians coming together to offer their experiences to GARS. Their first meeting will take place on Jan 14th. They are, Eddie, WD4JEM, Brian, NX9O, Tad, NZ3I, and Wayne, AD4MY. Bob, KA4EMV and myself will sit in as advisors to the Executive Committee. Serious planning is ahead for 1995 to expand our communications system and we intend to do great things.

Jim, KR4XY is still taking orders for our fine GARS apparel. There are hats and two jackets to choose from and a white polo shirt, with name and call sign and the GARS logo on all. So if you want to be in style with the crowd, you are going to have to talk with Jim.

I hope to see you all at the next meeting. Bring a friend or another family member and enjoy our fellowship dinner chit chatting with all your GARS friends and neighbors. It's a fun thing to do on the third Thursday of the month. I am sure that many of you have new Christmas toys to show off or discuss. So come one, come all see you there.

73 Howie W4NVF

A Not Very Funny Production ♦

3/95

## Ham Radio '95 Update

by Larry Osborne, KD4QFD

Plans for HAM RADIO '95 are falling into place. Some big things are being scheduled for everyone's enjoyment.

You want FORUMS? How about 24 of them! Some of the forums scheduled so far are: the FCC, Packet, ,ATV, Antenna Tips, Contesting, SWL, and 7 forums from the folks who actually went to those far away and exotic DX lands.

People like Gordon West, Bob Grove, Dave Johnson, Tony DePrato, John Loy and Al Hernandez discussing the things they know best.

How about vendors? So far, they are Startek, Yaesu, HRO, Ramsey, CQ Magazine, Outbacker, Texas Towers, the Wireman, Micro Computer Center and Ham Station, just to name a few.

Tailgate? Right outside next to the building. Where do you park? Well, how about spaces for 2800 cars right outside, with space for 2500 more within 100 yards.

That isn't enough? What do YOU want? What activities or forums do you want to see at a ham fest? Let me know. A Special Event Station is planned, and they want our trailer tower for the job!

Want to be a control op at the station? Call me. I will try to keep everyone updated as plans continue. Remember, we are doing the Flea Market.

Hamfest '95 is Scheduled for April 7, 8 & 9 and will be held at the North Atlanta Trade Center near Exit 38 and I-85N.

See you there. ♦

## CW CLASS

BY DAVID ADCOCK, KA4KKF

GARS will hold a CW Class beginning February 6, 1995 from 7:30PM to 9:00PM

To run for 8 weeks, the class will be for the beginner as well as the intermediate. We will use the Farnsworth method and give tips on operation as well as having a good time.

Meet at the Justice & Admin. building at 7:30PM in the executive dining room.

## johnny says...

We can look forward to soon hearing K4HRB back with us on 444.525 repeater. Ron is a great one for sniffing out those bargains. He found a Motorola Talky in a pawn shop. He is getting the radio programmed and hopes to be on soon.

Look for Ron and welcome him back into the fold. He has been working all kinds of DX.

Also take note of the fact that Everett, KE4PWV passed his general theory and needs some work on the code but hopes to have it down very soon.

I'd like to thank the excellent work of Cheryl, KE4JKM and Steve, KS4EV, for running the code practice on Tuesday and Thursday nights during the holidays.

I'm still looking for some people to help with the code practice during the month.

Please contact me on the air or call me at 466-4038 or 466-0099. ♦

6-95

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# HOW TO SOUND LIKE A LID

by Steve Burel AD4LY

On 2 meters lately (no one in particular) I have heard some people making a concerted effort to sound like a lid, (poor operator.) Since this appears to be the new trend in amateur radio, I thought I'd present this handy guide to radio AIR-DO-DUM. The following is how to sound like a lid in 1 easy lesson.

1. Use as many Q signals as possible. Yes, I know they were created strictly for CW and are totally inappropriate for 2 meters, but they're fun and entertaining. They keep people guessing as to what you really meant. For example, "I'm gonna QSY to the kitchen." Can you really change frequency to the kitchen? QSL used to mean "I am now acknowledging your receipt." But now it seems to mean "YES" or "OK." I guess I missed it when ARRL changed the meaning.

2. Never laugh when you can say "HI HI." No one will ever know that you're a long time rag-chewer if you don't tell them. They'll think you've been on the air since the days of Marconi.

3. Use an alternative vocabulary. Use words like destinated, and negatory. It's OK to make up your own words here, "Yeah Bill, I feel barstophonics occasionally myself."

4. Always follow your call by saying, "FOR ID." Anything that creates redundancy is always strongly encouraged. That's why we have THE DEPARTMENT of REDUNDANCY department. Please note, you can follow your call with, "FOR IDENTIFICATION PURPOSES" instead of "FOR ID." While taking longer to say it, it's worth more LID points.

5. The better the copy on 2 meter FM, all the more reason to phonetically spell your

name, especially if it's a short or common one. For example, "My name is Al/alpha lima", or "Jack/juliet alpha charlie kilo". If at all possible, make up unintelligible phonetics. "My name is Bob, billybong oregano bumperpool."

6. I'd give the calls of yourself, and anyone who is, or has been in the group, weather they're still there or not. Though this has been unnecessary for years, it's still a wonderful memory test.

7. Whenever possible, use the wrong terminology, it keeps people guessing. Use modulation when you mean deviation, and visa versa. And even if the FM 2 meter amplifier you're using is class C type amp, and therefore not biased for liner amplification, be sure to call it your liner. Heck, refer to all FM style amplifiers as liners, you'll be king of the wrong terminology hill.

8. If someone asks for a break, always finish your turn, talking as long as possible before turning it over. Whenever possible, pass it around a few times. This will discourage the breaker, and if it's an emergency, will encourage him or her to switch to another repeater and not bother you. And under no circumstances go simplex, even if the two parties are only a few meters apart. Everyone needs to hear what a LID has to say.

9. Always ask involved questions to people who are trying to sign off. Never let them get by with a YES or NO answer, make it a question that will take a long time to answer.

10. The less you know about a subject, the more you should speculate about it on the air. The amount of time spent on your speculation should be inversely proportional to the subject.

11. Never, never write down another stations call sign or name. Always trust your memory so you can ask him again every time around or butcher his identity.

*Adapted from an article which first appeared in the RUSTY BUMPER - N4LID section of the May, 1993 issue of SOLID COPY, The Richmond, VA Amateur Telecommunications Society monthly news letter. ♦*

As of the December meeting, GARS now has 206 total members (includes non-licensees). Class distribution is as follows:

36 Extra  
36 Advanced  
19 General  
27 Tech +  
79 Tech  
9 non

so: 88 members don't know the code.

while: 118 members know the code.

and: 91 members know the code at 13wpm or higher.

Statistics by Joe Biddle, AD4PZ

(Ham, Continued from p. 1)

dipole and G5RV antennae for HF operations. He is using a Yaesu FT 470 and a roof mounted plumber's delight vertical made from copper tubing for VHF/UHF. The antenna was built from a QST article. He is also involved in Packet Radio using a Baypac Modem. Currently, Joe is the Public Relations Chairman for GARS and his PC skills have really paid off in the form of very professional GARS flyers and notices. Joe is great about getting information to the papers and putting notices on most of the Atlanta Ham Radio oriented computer BBS's. Joe is married to Rita and has one (very cute "Little Zipper") son named Kevin who is 2.5 years old.

Other interests include computers and barber shop style chorus. Joe became re-interested in chorus while working at Rockwell International. Once, their chorus got to present the national anthem at a Braves game. Joe's most interesting on the air contact was a 20 minute CW contact with Australia. This tells you something about where we are in the sunspot cycle. As far as the future is concerned, Joe is looking the next peak in the sun spots. GARS is fortunate to have members like Joe Biddle and everyone is urged to seek him out at the next GARS function and get his philosophy on about any subject that you would like to discuss. ♦

Detach and Mail

## GARS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION (SHORTER FORM)



Amateur Callsign: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Expires: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Work-Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax-Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional members for Family Memberships:

CALLSIGN:

CLASS (circle 1)

BIRTH DATE

ARRL Y/N

LIFE?Y/N

E A G T+ T N

E A G T+ T N

E A G T+ T N

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

[Y] [N]

[Y] [N]

[Y] [N]

[Y] [N]

[Y] [N]

[Y] [N]

Check Interests:

[ ] -Class instruction [ ] -Field Day operation [ ] -Repeater maintenance [ ] -GARS club booth staffing [ ] -Community events [ ] -Emergency [ ] -Administrative [ ] -Fund raisers  
[ ] Other \_\_\_\_\_

Dues: April 1 to Sept 30

From Oct. 1 to Dec. 31:

From Jan 1 to March 31

Type of membership: [ ] -Individual

ARRL Member? Y/N

\$25.00 for Individual Memberships

\$12.50 for Individual Membership

\$6.25 for Individual Membership

[ ] -Family

Life? Y/N

\$35.00 for Family Memberships

\$17.50 for Family Memberships

\$8.75 for Family Memberships

Mail your completed application with check made out to GARS to: Gwinnett Amateur Radio Society, PO Box 88 Lilburn, Ga 30226





**GARS News** publishes the Atlanta Metro Area VE/VEC Examination Schedules as a service to its members and assumes no responsibility for errors or schedule changes. Call and confirm schedules before going. All sessions are walk-in. Take copies of current license and/or certificate of completed elements with you to all sessions.

# TEST SESSIONS

**1st Sunday - Lawrenceville W5YI-VEC - Jackson EMC**  
461 Swanson Rd - Lawrenceville - 2:00PM  
Duane Reynolds, WB2YAD - 623-9083

**1st Monday - Roswell ARRL-VEC 7:30PM**  
St Ann Catholic Church - 4905 Roswell Rd - Marietta  
Delaine McCarthy, KM4FV - 993-9758

**1st Saturday - Clayton Co. Emergency Mgmt Bldg**  
7496 N. McDonough St. - Jonesboro - 9:00AM  
George White, KN4NG 361-6850

**2nd Sundays - First Presbyterian Church**  
183 West Main Street, Cartersville 3:00PM  
Mark Swicord, KD4EYF - 975-1309

**2nd Tuesday - Walton EMC 7:00PM**  
3645 - Lenora Church Rd, Snellville  
Wayne Taylor, WD4CCA 498-7759

**2nd Saturday - Stn Mtn CA-VEC 8:30AM**  
Stone Mountain Methodist Church, 5312 W. Mountain Street  
Hal Martin, KI4RD - 978-9160

**3rd Saturdays - Marietta First United Methodist Church**  
56 Whitlock Ave, Room 319 - 9:00AM  
Larry Huff, WA4CQZ - 955-3171

**4th Sunday N Atlanta ARRL-VEC - Episcopal Church of the Atonement**  
2:30PM Highpoint Rd, Atlanta  
John King, AB4GK - 381-5291

**4th Friday GARS W5YI-VEC - 7:00PM - St John Neumann Church**  
801 Tom Smith Rd, off Five Forks Trickum Rd, Lilburn  
Howie Gould, W4NVF 921-8362 Headphones!

## HAMFEST CALENDAR

Jan	14	.. Hamfest, Greenwood, SC
Jan	14-15	Hamfest & Computer Show, Sarasota, FL
Jan	21	.. Citrus Co. Hamfest, Crystal River, FL
Jan	28	.. Hamfest TVARN Gallatin, TN
Jan	29	.. Hamfest, Stuart FL
Feb	4	... Hamfest, Knoxville, TN
Feb	11	.. Hamfest, Charleston, SC
Feb	11	.. Hamfest, Pensacola, FL
Feb	11	.. Hamfest, Arcadia, FL
Feb	25	.. Hamfest, Dalton, GA

?=Date not confirmed. Several entries taken from SERA Journal.  
Georgia locations are bold, Nearby locations are bold and underlined

## METRO AREA NETS AND ROUNDTABLES

Mon	146.82	8:00PM	ARC Net
Mon	147.81	8:00PM	Conyers ARES Net
* Mon	145.45	8:00PM	ARES Net
* Mon	145.41	8:30PM	MATPARC Net
* Tue	147.075+	8:00PM	Info Want Swap & Sell GARS
* Tue	147.075+	9:00PM	CW Practice Net - GARS
* Wed	145.41	8:00PM	QCWA Net
Wed	146.655	9:00PM	BSRG Net
Thu	146.88	8:00PM	Kennahoochie ARC
* Thu	147.225+	8:00PM	NE Ga ARC (1st thurs = 9:30)
* Thu	147.075+	9:00PM	CW Practice Net - GARS
Thu	145.41	9:30PM	AMSAT
* Thu	Cable57	9:30PM	Amateur Television, ATV
* Sun	146.76	7:00PM	Roundtable AMRC
Sun		9:00PM	W4DOC
Daily	146.76	Noon	Brown Bag Net
Daily	146.88	11:00PM	Late Nite Owl Net
Daily	146.79	8:00PM	Sassafrass Min

\* CONFIRMED This is a "living list" meaning it is constantly changing. If you know of additions or changes to it please contact the Editor.



P.O. Box 88  
Lilburn, GA 30226



AD: 3801 SD: NA Dues: 01-Apr-97

**GARS Meeting at WILLIAMS SEAFOOD on Buford Highway on the 3rd Thursday, January 19th. Program this month will be on UHF/VHF contesting with a slide presentation by Jim Holt. Dont miss out! Be there.**